

Community Outreach: The Asian Pacific Islander Dementia Care Network

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The Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the United States, has awarded a Family and Informal Caregiver Support Program grant to support the creation of a Sacramento Asian Pacific Islander (API) Dementia Care Network, a joint project of the Asian Community Center of Sacramento (ACC), the Alzheimer's Association, Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter and the UCD-Sacramento CADC.

According to the Alzheimer's Association's Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures in California, while the incidence of Alzheimer's Disease (AD) in the general population in California is projected to double by 2030 in people over age 55, that number will actually triple among the API community, created a burgeoning need for dementia care.

"Sacramento County has one of the highest concentrations of API elders in the state, but this community has a history of health and social services underutilization," said Edie Yau, director of Diversity with the Alzheimer's Association. "Persistent reliance on family, cultural beliefs, lack of knowledge about dementia and other conditions, limited English skills and a lack of language/culturally competent services combine as barriers to service to the API community."

The Sacramento API Dementia Care Network partnership will address these barriers by focusing on three key areas: improving the understanding of dementia and depression among API family caregivers and community organizations; building capacity to enable service providers to reach families and coordinate services; and piloting interventions using community assets to identify, serve and connect API caregivers with service providers and information that sustains family care of elders.

"This project will seek to provide direct assistance to caregivers from Sacramento's very diverse Asian communities including Chinese, Japanese and Filipino among others with services such as caregiver education, drop-in respite care, in-home nursing services and much more," said Donna Yee, chief executive officer, Asian Community Center. "The project will also offer education to mainstream service providers on how to work with this very linguistically and culturally diverse population."

"The evidence is clear that community organizations need to facilitate access to the support service needs of API caregivers," said Ladson Hinton M.D., UCD-Sacramento CADC Education Core Director. "This grant will allow our organizations to create a network that will enable an underserved population to gain access to comprehensive support services for family caregivers and their care receivers."

The Family and Informal Caregiver Support Program was established by the Weinberg Foundation to increase support for projects that support family and friends that deliver the majority of care to chronically ill and disabled older loved ones. The grants were made to nonprofits in nine states, including California, New York, Florida, Texas, Maine, New Hampshire, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. The grants provide funds to support innovative and evidence-based community projects that help family and friends who care for low- and moderate- income, older adults.

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